



"What in the world people are really thinking"

For Immediate Release

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Community Voices/Zogby Poll shows Strong Support for Prisoner Rehabilitation Services

Community Voices/Zogby poll shows most in Georgia, Washington DC believe job training is vital to successful reintegration after incarceration

UTICA, New York – An overwhelming majority in both Washington, DC and statewide in Georgia would support a policy to make state-funded rehabilitation services available to incarcerated people both while they are in prison and after they have been released, a pair of polls conducted by Zogby International on behalf of Community Voices at Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) shows. Eighty-two percent in Washington, DC and 64% statewide in Georgia would support rehabilitation services during and after incarceration.

The telephone polls surveyed 501 likely voters in Washington, DC from Jan. 11-19, 2007 and 800 likely voters statewide in Georgia from Jan. 11-22, 2007. The poll in Washington, DC carries a margin of error of +/- 4.5 percentage points and the poll in Georgia carries a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percentage points.

Respondents were asked to give their opinions on four alternative prison policies that state prison systems could follow for people who have committed property crimes or drug-related offenses and not violent crimes, as indicated in this chart:

Which policy should state and local governments implement:	Washington, DC	Georgia
Policy 1. Treat prison as punishment and do not offer rehabilitation services to people either during their time in prison or after their release.	2%	9%
Policy 2. Make state-funded rehabilitation services available to incarcerated people while they are serving time in prison.	6%	13%
Policy 3. Make state-funded rehabilitation services available to incarcerated people only after they have been released from prison.	8%	10%
Policy 4. Make state-funded rehabilitation services available to incarcerated people both while they are in prison and after they have been released from prison.	82%	64%

Nearly all respondents in both Washington, DC and Georgia believe access to job training is important to successful reintegration into society after incarceration – 94% in Washington DC

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and 81% in Georgia said this is very important. Nearly nine in 10 in Georgia said it is important for released prisoners to have access to medical services (84%) and access to student loans for education (85%) in order to successfully integrate into society. In Washington DC, 94% and 92%, respectively, believe these two factors are important to successful integration.

When presented with a list of opportunities which could be available for those convicted of felonies who have recently been released from prison – including being allowed to serve on a jury, vote, and have access to public housing and medical services both Washington DC and Georgia respondents favored expansive opportunities in every category.

Ninety percent of Washington, DC respondents and 86% of those in Georgia believe that it is important to provide access to public housing to ensure a successful reintegration, while 77% in Washington, DC and 64% in Georgia think reinstating the right to vote is important.

Nearly all those living in Washington, DC agree that felons should receive job training (98%) and have access to medical services (97%). In Georgia, support for these services is high – 91% said they should receive job training and 83% said felons should have access to medical services.

More than half (57%) in Georgia believe that released felons should have the right to vote and 80% in Washington, DC said they feel the same. Three in four Georgians agree that those who have received felony convictions should be allowed to have access to student loans (76%) and to public housing (75%). Those in Washington, DC support the same services – 90% for student loans and 84% for public housing.

Nine in 10 (91%) of Washington, DC respondents said they agree that felons should have access to state-subsidized health services, as well as 65% of those respondents in Georgia.

For more information regarding this survey, please contact Melva Robertson, Health Communications Specialist, at Community Voices at Morehouse School of Medicine at 404-752-1977 and visit our website at www.communityvoices.org to view the report.

Community Voices: Healthcare for the Underserved is working to make health care available to all. With eight sites across the country and managed by the National Center for Primary Care at the Morehouse School of Medicine, Community Voices is helping to ensure the survival of safety-net providers and strengthen community support services. Launched in 1998 by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the sites are part of a national effort to sort out what works from what does not in meeting the needs of those who receive inadequate or no health care.

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